

Washington State Patrol Media Release

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Citizen Help Needed

In an effort to keep AMBER Alert foremost on the minds of Americans, we would like to ask for your help in recognizing the day Amber Hagerman was abducted, January 13, 1996. We encourage citizens to log on to www.washingtonamberalert.com and sign up to receive alerts and status updates via e-mail, pagers or cell phones. The service is free and is only activated to alert subscribers of what to look for to help the speedy location of a child whose life may be in danger.

Over the past two years, we have made remarkable strides in our efforts to safely recover abducted children through the AMBER Alert program. Nationwide 160 children have been safely recovered since AMBER Alert began in 1996, 79 percent of those recoveries (127 total) have been between October 2002 and October 2004.

The collaboration of communities, states and territories, coming together to improve their AMBER plans, has made a remarkable difference in the number of abducted children recovered. In the state of Washington the AMBER Alert Web Portal www.washingtonamberalert.com is one example of how the voluntary partnership and cooperative combined effort among the Washington State Patrol, the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs, Washington State Association of Broadcasters, Washington Emergency Management Division, Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), the Washington State Attorney General's Office, and the Washington State Department of Information Services among many others has enhanced our AMBER Alert plan.

So far, 126 law enforcement agencies across Washington State have joined, and are pre-authorized to issue an AMBER Alert by using the Web Portal. (The entire list of agencies can be found at <http://www.wsp.wa.gov/amber/local.htm>.) With one keystroke an officer can disseminate live information and updates to engage individuals into the search for the abducted child.

“This system is an important tool we can use to find missing children in the state of Washington,” said Chief Lowell M. Porter. “We need your help to make the system successful, without the eyes of Washington citizens the AMBER Alert program is not as successful.”

Information about AMBER Alert will be available through the WSDOT Highway Advisory Radio (HAR) system during the first few weeks of January in memory of Amber Hagerman. Citizens can also find links to the Washington AMBER Alert Web portal on the state’s Internet portal, Access Washington <http://access.wa.gov>.

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